

RECOGNIZING SHERMAN INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT'S READING RECOV-
ERY PROGRAM

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to recognize Sherman Independent School District's Reading Recovery program.

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed a landmark law, the No Child Left Behind Act, which stresses academic achievement for all students and includes more accountability for student results. The Sherman Independent School District's Reading Recovery program meets and exceeds the standards and guidelines of that law. Reading Recovery is a highly effective, short-term intervention involving one-on-one tutoring for low-achieving first graders. Students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher. As soon as students demonstrate that they can read within the average range of their classmates, their lessons are discontinued.

Sherman's Reading Recovery program is a big success. At the Reading Recovery site located at Crutchfield Elementary School, students who completed the program passed the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) test by a rate of 92 percent last year. The gains made by these students are truly impressive—they had higher text reading gains than their peers, had low levels of placement in special education classes, and had high levels of advancement to the next grade level.

Reading Recovery is precisely the kind of program our schools need to advance the goals of the No Child Left Behind law. Research issued by the U.S. Department of Education finds that students tutored according to the Reading Recovery model read more proficiently than 75 percent of their untutored peers. This program is a valuable part of a comprehensive literacy plan and supplements good classroom teaching.

On behalf of the students, teachers, and administrators of the Sherman Independent School District's Reading Recovery program, I want to take this opportunity in the House of Representatives to commend their successful efforts to leave no child behind.

HONORING LIEUTENANT CHARLES
REINHARDT

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Charles Reinhardt for his years of dedicated service and unwavering commitment to the police force and the people of Union City. He is being honored today, October 8, 2004, at a retirement party in Union City, New Jersey.

From an early age, Lieutenant Reinhardt took an interest in military and police work. At the age of 18, he became one of the youngest officers in the history of the Union City Police Department when he joined the force as a po-

lice special. Three years later, he was sworn in as an official police officer. As an officer, he worked in a variety of areas, including traffic, crime prevention, community policing, and patrol. His tireless work and solid leadership skills earned him the rank of Lieutenant, also serving for a short time as the unit's commander and as a supervisor. He became one of the first Hispanic police sergeants in Union City and was the first Puerto Rican Lieutenant on the force.

Known for his attendance of community events, Lieutenant Reinhardt made great efforts to reach out to the citizens of Union City, particularly the Hispanic community. His passion and hard work have been acknowledged by numerous groups, including the American Federation of Police, the American Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Hispanic Law Enforcement Officers Association of Hudson County, the Union City Police Department, and the American Police Hall of Fame.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Lieutenant Charles Reinhardt for almost three decades of selfless service to Union City and its residents. The passion and commitment he demonstrated throughout his career and for his community made him an important member of the police force.

TRIBUTE TO WES KEUSDER ON
THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIRE-
MENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE
BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIA-
TION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Wes Keusder, who has been a dedicated, strong and effective voice for the principles and ideals of California's building community during his years as a member and leader of the Building Industry Association of Southern California (BIA/SC). Riverside County and all of southern California has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Wes is one of these individuals. On November 5, 2004, Wes will be honored by BIA at their 38th Annual Awards and Installation Dinner.

Wes Keusder is a third generation home builder in California and has worked for over twenty years to make homeownership a reality for thousands of California's families. Wes followed in the footsteps of his father, Walter Keusder Jr., and grandfather, Walter Keusder, by serving as President of BIA/SC as well as participating in the California Building Industry Association and the National Association of Home Builders. Wes has demonstrated exemplary leadership and service to the building industry by serving as the President of the BIA Riverside County Chapter in 2001 and 2002. Additionally, Wes served as a Director of the Building Industry Legal Defense Fund, whose mission is to defend the rights of home and property owners.

Homeownership is an American dream, and housing is a community asset which strengthens the fabric of neighborhoods. Wes has worked tirelessly to ensure that thousands of

Californians can make that dream a reality. His passion and service for homeownership has improved Riverside and all of Southern California. Wes Keusder has earned my many thanks and I wish him great success in all his future endeavors.

PENSION FAIRNESS ACT OF 2004

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced the Pension Fairness Act to bring some equity to bear between corporate executives and rank-and-file workers when those executives seek to dump underfunded workers' pension plans onto the Federal Government or cut older workers' pensions through an unfair cash balance plan conversion.

Far too often, we hear of cases where executives demand concessions from their workers when the business struggles and, at the same time, sweeten their own pension and deferred compensation deals. It's past time that executives understand that the pension promises made to their workers are sacred. It's past time that executives understand that a breach of those promises carries consequences. Employees cannot be asked to absorb the full brunt of bankruptcy by having their pension plans terminated and dropped on the Federal Government. Executives should share in that pain.

When companies terminate their underfunded pension plans, the federally established Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) takes over those liabilities. Today, the PBGC suffers from a \$10 billion deficit. Already in bankruptcy, United Airlines, which recently defied the law and stopped making legally-required contributions to its pension plans, would add \$6.4 billion to the PBGC's obligations if the company terminates its plans. United's workers and retirees would lose \$1.9 billion in earned pension benefits. US Airways has asked a bankruptcy court for permission to skip a \$110 million contribution to its pension plans, due last month. Plan terminations at these companies would pose serious threats not just to the retirement security of their employees but to the retirement security of other airlines' employees and to the ongoing solvency of the PBGC. When executives are faced with the choice between terminating or saving company pension plans they also should have a stake in that choice.

In recent years, we have seen companies break their pension promises by converting their traditional pension plans into cash balance plans. Many of these conversions do wonders for a company's books—to the great delight of executives and directors—but end up cutting older workers' pension benefits. Many of these conversions have given workers no choice between the cash balance and traditional pension plans. Just last year, a court found that the cash balance conversion at IBM, which all employees were forced to take, would result in a 47 percent reduction in older workers' pensions. The Government Accountability Office found similar losses of up to 50 percent of older workers' promised pensions.